



THE SCROLLS

Helping one another mature so we can impact our world for Christ

This week's belief: Identity in Christ

For the week of September 12th, 2005

Beliefs	The Roman Crux
T rinity	
S alvation by	At the center of the Christian movement is a very simple symbol: the Roman Crux (cross). Two wooden beams perpendicularly affixed to form an instrument of trauma, humiliation and deterrence. It is a very odd sort of thing to celebrate. But sublime truths and amazing paradoxes emerge from the event in which "all the fullness of the Deity" fell under the wrath of God for our forgiveness and liberation.
G race	In this week's passage a story is told of a daring rescue. Paul digresses from warnings about untruths to review the foundational material of our faith. He explains a situation in which we were in desperate trouble. God's holy code stood opposed to us because of our sin. The result was that we found ourselves under the control of hostile masters. We were both justly condemned and under various forms of bondage. The cross is an event of forgiveness and liberation; atonement and redemption. These functions of Christ's work on the cross are summarized well by Boyd, Eddy and Grudem below:
A uthority of Bible	<u>Forgiveness</u> : "Every possible sin that could ever separate us from God – every wrong we did, every good we failed to do, every thought, word, or deed that "fell short of the glory of God" – has been "set aside" and "nailed to the cross". (Col 2:14)" (Gregory Boyd and Paul Eddy, <i>Across the Spectrum</i>)
P ersonal God	<u>Liberation</u> : "Because we as sinners are in bondage to sin and to Satan we need someone to provide redemption...We were redeemed from bondage to Satan because 'the whole world is in the power of the evil one' (1 John 5:19), and when Christ came he died to 'deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage' (Heb 2:15)" (Wayne Grudem, <i>Systematic Theology</i>)
I dentity in Christ	<i>This week our FBC family will investigate the beauty and power of these two amazing truths.</i>
C hurch	"The cross of Christ is the most revolutionary thing ever to appear among men." A.W. Tozer
H umanity	Monday – A Digression in Truth
C ompassion	Please read Colossians Chapter 2 paying special attention to verses 9-15
E ternity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What would you say is Paul's primary objective for writing this chapter? How do verses 9-15 differ topically from the rest of the chapter? 2. In verses 11-15 we get a short summary of the central message of Christianity. In your own words, what is the central message? Why would that be important to what Paul is trying to accomplish in this chapter? 3. What two major topics does Paul cover in verses 9-15? Why might he choose these? 4. Of these two major truths, which one do you most need to hold onto for today?
S tewardship	Tuesday – An Outward Sign of an Inward Reality
P ractices	"These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me." Isaiah 29:13
W orship	Please read Colossians 2:11-15
P rayer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Think about all the baptisms you have ever seen (including your own). Which one is the most memorable? Why are these moments so special to the Community of Faith? 2. In a sense, it is the baptismal ceremony that has replaced Jewish circumcision for
B ible S tudy	Christians. How are the two related in this passage? What social similarities are there between baptism and circumcision?
S ingle-mindedness	3. The key to understanding what Paul is saying is found in these words,
B iblical Community	"In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, <i>not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ.</i> "
S piritual Gifts	Though circumcision and baptism are an outward sign or ritual, they were always designed to convey an inward reality of our love relationship with God. What does Paul say about that inward reality in Col. 2?
G iving My T ime	4. This is what Jesus was talking about when he called us to love him, not with our rituals, but with all our heart. How can you love Christ today with all your heart?
G iving My Money	
G iving My Faith	
G iving My Life	
V irtues	
L ove	
J oy	
P eace	
P atience	
K indness/Goodness	
F aithfulness	
G entleness	
S elf-Control	
H ope	
H umility	
F orgiveness	

Christians. How are the two related in this passage? What social similarities are there between baptism and circumcision?

3. The key to understanding what Paul is saying is found in these words, "In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, *not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ.*"

Though circumcision and baptism are an outward sign or ritual, they were always designed to convey an inward reality of our love relationship with God. What does Paul say about that inward reality in Col. 2?

4. This is what Jesus was talking about when he called us to love him, not with our rituals, but with all our heart. How can you love Christ today with all your heart?

Wednesday – "You Were Dead"

"...the law of God... stands as God's statement of our indebtedness; and once we are awakened by the Spirit, our conscience acknowledges that the claims of divine justice are absolutely righteous, and that we are hopelessly in debt."

H. M. Carson, *Colossians and Philemon*

Please read Colossians 2:11-15.

1. What does the text say is the "state" God found us in? According to Paul, what is the basic problem we found ourselves in? (Please turn over)

2. Why might Paul distinguish between sins and the sinful nature? Why do both result in death?
3. Why do you think Paul might have talked about how we were dead in our sinful nature after his discussion of the resurrection in verse 12?
4. What does Paul mean by “God made you alive with Christ?” Do you feel particularly alive?

Digging Deeper - What habits cultivate a realization of this ‘aliveness’ that we have in Him? What habits erode that sense of aliveness?

Thursday – The Great Exchange

“This is how God resolved his dilemma of how to share his love with beings who, by their own choice, have made themselves antithetical to his holy nature. On Calvary, God’s love bore the judgment of sin that his own holy nature required. Jesus died in our place.”

Gregory Boyd and Paul Eddy, *Across the Spectrum*

Please read Colossians 2:11-15.

1. Are there memories that you carry that incite significant feelings of guilt?
2. What do you think “the written code” is that Paul refers to in verse 14? Why is it “against us” and “opposed to us”?
3. What does Christ do to it? Why is the cross important for our forgiveness?
4. How do Christ’s actions on the cross free us from contrite guilt? Is there something that is standing opposed to you that you need Christ to take away, “nailing it to the cross?”

Friday – Victory!

He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets. Col. 2:15 (The Message)

Please read Colossians 2:11-15.

Text Insight - Look over verse 15 a couple of times. There are two primary ways the Church has historically understood what actually transpired on the cross. In this passage both emerge. Yesterday we looked at the first: God’s fulfillment of his holy requirement by the substitution of Christ in our place of punishment. Today we look at the other: God’s triumph over the powers (social, political or demonic) that had held our allegiance, whether consciously or implicitly, in our rebellious state.

1. Paul mentions “powers and authorities” a couple of times previous to this verse in 1:15-16 and 2:9-10. What information do these verses give us about who Paul is referring to by “powers and authorities”?
2. What image comes to your mind as you read verse 15? What is the significance of the assertion that Jesus made a public spectacle of the powers and authorities during the Crucifixion event?
3. What unhealthy allegiances or addictions did Christ free you from? Are their allegiances or addictions that need the power of Christ’s victory in your life?

Digging Deeper - If you answered yes to question #3, as most of us would, consider committing verse 15 to memory and meditating on it as you ask God to make the power of the cross tangible in your life.

Saturday – Free Indeed

Because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, his blood poured out on the altar of the Cross, we’re a free people—free of penalties and punishments chalked up by all our misdeeds. And not just barely free, either. Abundantly free!

Eph. 1:7 (The Message)

Please read Colossians 2:11-15 in light of Eph. 1:7 (above)

1. In what ways have you had tangible experiences of forgiveness and liberation in your life since associating with Christ’s victory and suffering on the cross?
2. Review the quotes in the introduction. Which best conveys how you view Christ’s work on the cross?
3. Consider writing in a notebook for a few minutes your response to what you have learned this week. Write down what you would like to remember or change about your life in response to what we’ve learned this week.



Homegroup Discussion

This section is designed for Home Groups and Small Groups who would like to discuss the Scrolls together. Begin by reading the introduction, Colossians 2:11-15.

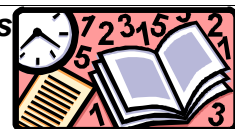
1. What is your favorite memory of a baptism? What does the passage say Baptism represents?
2. Split into partners and talk through the following scenario: Your friend has just seen the *Passion of the Christ* and tells you “I am completely bewildered as to why this movie was so popular. Why would Christians celebrate such a horrible event?” You have 60 seconds to explain the reason for

the cross. Go.

3. What do you think “the written code” is that Paul refers to in verse 14? Why is it “against us” and “opposed to us”?
4. This passage is packed with powerful word images. (If you have access to the Message translation you might read it together?) Which of these images impresses you most? What does it illustrate?
5. Read the two quotes in the introduction. Which better describes your understanding of what Christ did on the cross? In what ways have you had tangible experiences of forgiveness or liberation in your experience with Christ?
6. Are there memories or habits through which you consistently experience guilt or bondage that need the reality of the cross? How could the group pray for or support you?

Family Time with Kids

Families can use these Bible readings and the question of the week to help your children learn about their faith.



___ **Monday:** Psalm 103:3

___ **Tuesday:** Ephesians 1:7

___ **Wednesday:** Colossians 2:10-15

___ **Thursday:** Colossians 3:13

___ **Friday:** Galatians 5:1

Question of the Week: What do these verses say about forgiveness and freedom?

Where does our freedom and forgiveness come from? From what are we free and forgiven?